The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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CONTENTS OF NO. 6.

FROM WHITTIER TO HOLMES 65
A CLASS POEM 65
EARTHLY CARE A HEAVENLY DISCIPLINE . . . 66
THE STILL HOUR 69
THE BIBLE CLASS 69
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL 70
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 72
MISCELLANEOUS 75

FROM WHITTIER TO HOLMES.

[Dr. Holmes's eighty-third birthday, Aug. 29, 1892, inspired Whittier's last lines, written only a few days before his death.]

Among the thousands who with hail and cheer
Will welcome thy new year,
How few of all have passed, as thou and I,
So many milestones by!

We have grown old together; we have seen,
Our youth and age between,
Two generations leave us, and to-day
We with the third hold sway,

Loving and loved. If thought must backward run
To those who, one by one,
In the great silence and the dark beyond
Vanished with farewells fond,

Unseen, not lost, our grateful memories still
Their vacant places fill,
And with the full-voiced greeting of new friends,
A tender whisper blends.

Linked close in a pathetic brotherhood
Of mingled ill and good,
Of joy and grief, of grandeur and of shame,
For pity more than blame,

The gift is thine the weary world to make
More cheerful for thy sake;
Soothing the earth its Miserere pains,
With the old Hellenic strains;

Lighting the sullen face of discontent
With smiles for blessings sent.
Enough of selfish wailing has been had.
Thank God for notes more glad!

Life is indeed no holiday: therein
Are want and woe and sin,
Death and its nameless fears; and over all
Our pitying tears must fall.

Thy hand, old friend! the service of our days,
In d ffering moods and ways,
May prove to those who follow in our train
Not valueless nor vain.

Far off, and faint as echoes of a dream,
The songs of boyhood seem;
Yet on our autumn boughs, unflown with spring,
The evening thrushes sing.

The hour draws near, howe'er delayed and late,
When at the Eternal Gate
We leave the words and works we call our own,
And lift void hands alone

For love to fill. Our nakedness of soul
Brings to that Gate no toll:
Giftless, we come to Him who all things gives,
And live because he lives.

A CLASS POEM.

How fast the lamps of life grow dim and die
Beneath our sunset sky!
Still fading, as along our track
We cast our saddened glances back,
And, while we vainly sigh,
The shadowy day recedes, the starry night draws nigh.

As when from pier to pier across the tide
With even keel we glide,
The lights we left along the shore
Grow less and less, while more, yet more
New vistas open wide
Of fair illumined streets and casements golden-eyed.

Each closing circle of our sunlit sphere
Seems to bring heaven more near:
Can we not dream that those we love
Are listening in the world above,
And smiling as they hear
The voices known so well of friends that still are dear?

Does all that made us human fade away
With this dissolving clay?
Nay, rather deem the blessed isles
Are bright and gay with joyous smiles,
That angels have their play,
And saints that tire of song may claim their holiday.

All else of earth may perish: love alone
Not heaven shall find outgrown!
Are they not here, our spirit guests,
With love still throbbing in their breasts?
Once more let flowers be strown.
Welcome, ye shadowy forms, we count you still our own!

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

EARTHLY CARE A HEAVENLY DISCIPLINE.

Nothing is more frequently felt and spoken of as a hindrance to the inward life of devotion than the "cares of life"; and even, upon the showing of our Lord himself, the cares of the world are the thorns that choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

And yet, if this is a necessary and inevitable result of worldly care, why does the providence of God so order things that it forms so large and unavoidable a part of every human experience? Why is the physical system of man arranged with such daily, oft-recurring wants? Why does his nature, in its full development, tend to that state of society in which wants multiply, and the business of supply becomes more complicated, and requiring constantly more thought and attention, and bringing the outward and seen into a state of constant friction and pressure on the inner and spiritual?

Has God arranged an outward system to be a constant diversion from the inward,—a weight on its wheels, a burden on its wings,—and then commanded a strict and rigid inwardness and spirituality? Why placed us where the things that are seen and temporal must unavoidably have so much of our thoughts and time and care, yet said to us: "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. Love not the world, neither the things of the world"? And why does one of our brightest examples of Christian experience, as it should be, say, "While we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal"?

The Bible tells us that our whole existence here is a disciplinary one; that this whole physical system, by which our spirit is enclosed, with all the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, and wants which form a part of it, is designed as an education to fit the soul for its immortality. And, as worldly care forms the greater part of the staple of every human life, there must be some mode of viewing and meeting it which converts it from an enemy of spirituality into a means of grace and spiritual advancement.

Why, then, do we so often hear the lamentation, "It seems to me as if I could advance to the higher stages of Christian life if it were not for the pressure of my business and the multitude of my worldly cares"? Is it not God, O Christian, who, in ordering thy lot, has laid these cares upon thee, and who still holds them about thee, and permits no escape from them? And, as his great, undivided object is thy spiritual improvement, is there not some misapprehension or wrong use of these cares, if they do not tend to advance it? Is it not even as if a scholar should say, I could advance in science, were it not for all the time and care which lessons and books and lectures require?

How, then, shall earthly care become heavenly discipline? How shall the disposition of the weight be altered so as to press the spirit upward toward God instead of downward and away? How shall the pillar of cloud which rises between us and him become one of fire, to reflect upon us constantly the light of his countenance, and to guide us over the sands of life's desert?

It appears to us that the great radical difficulty is an intellectual one, and lies in a wrong belief. There is not a genuine and real belief of the presence and agency of God in the minor events and details of life,

which is necessary to change them from secular cares into spiritual blessings.

It is true there is much loose talk about an overruling Providence; and yet, if fairly stated, the belief of a great many Christians might be thus expressed: God has organized and set in operation certain general laws of matter and mind which work out the particular results of life; and over these laws he exercises a general supervision and care, so that all the great affairs of the world are carried on after the counsel of his own will, and, in a certain general sense, all things are working together for good to those who love God. But, when some simple-minded, childlike Christian really proceeds to refer all the smaller events of life to God's immediate care and agency, there is a smile of incredulity; and it is thought that the good brother displays more Christian feeling than sound philosophy.

But, as life for every individual is made up of fractions and minute atoms, as those things which go to affect habits and character are small and hourly recurring, it comes to pass that a belief in Providence so very wide and general is altogether inefficient for consecrating and rendering sacred the great body of what comes in contact with the mind in the experience of life. Only once in years does the Christian with this kind of belief hear the voice of the Lord God speaking to him. When the hand of death is laid on his child, or the bolt strikes down the brother by his side, then, indeed, he feels that God is drawing near. He listens humbly for the inward voice that shall explain the meaning and need of this discipline. When, by some unforeseen occurrence, the whole of his earthly property is swept away,—he becomes a poor man,—this event, in his eyes, assumes sufficient magnitude to have come from God, and to have a design and meaning; but, when smaller comforts are removed, smaller losses are encountered, and the petty, every-day vexations and annoyances of life press about him, he recognizes no God, and hears no voice, and sees no design. Hence John Newton says, "Many Christians who bear the loss of a child or the destruction of all their property with the most heroic Christian fortitude are entirely vanquished and overcome by the breaking of a dish or the blunders of a servant, and show so unchristian a spirit that we cannot but wonder at them."

So, when the breath of slander or the pressure of human injustice comes so heavily on a man as really to threaten loss of character and destruction of his temporal interests, he seems forced to recognize the hand and voice of God through the veil of human agencies, and in time-honored words to say,—

> "When men of spite against me join,
> They are the *sword:* the hand is thine."

But the smaller injustice and fault-finding which meet every one more or less in the daily intercourse of life, the overheard remark, the implied censure, too petty, perhaps, to be even spoken of,—these daily recurring sources of disquietude and unhappiness are not referred to God's providence, nor considered as a part of his probation and discipline. Those thousand vexations which come upon us through the unreasonableness, the carelessness, the various constitutional failings, or ill-adaptedness of others to our peculiarities of character, form a very large item of the disquietudes of life; and yet how very few look beyond the human agent, and feel these are trials coming from God! Yet it is true in many cases that these so-called minor vexations form the greater part, and in many cases the only discipline, of life; and to those that do not view them as ordered individually by God, and coming upon them by specified design, "their affliction 'really' cometh of the dust, and their trouble springs out of the ground." It is sanctified and relieved by no divine presence and aid; but, borne alone and in a mere human spirit, and by mere human reliances, it acts on the mind as a constant diversion and hindrance instead of a moral discipline.

Hence, too, come a coldness and generality and wandering of mind in prayer: the things that are on the heart, that are distracting the mind, that have filled the soul so full that there is no room for anything else, are all considered too small and undignified to come within the pale of a prayer, and so, with a wandering mind and a distracted heart, the Christian offers up his prayer for things which he thinks he ought to want, and makes no mention of those

which he does. He prays that God would pour out his spirit on the heathen, and convert the world and build up his kingdom everywhere, when perhaps a whole set of little anxieties and wants and vexations are so distracting his thoughts that he hardly knows what he has been saying: a faithless servant is wasting his property; a careless or blundering workman has spoiled a lot of goods; a child is vexatious or unruly; a friend has made promises and failed to keep them; an acquaintance has made unjust or satirical remarks; some new furniture has been damaged or ruined by carelessness in the household. But all this trouble forms no subject-matter for prayer, though there it is, all the while lying like lead on the heart and keeping it down, so that it has no power to expand and take in anything else. But were God known and regarded as the soul's familiar friend, were every trouble of the heart, as it rises, breathed into his bosom, were it felt that there is not one of the smallest of life's troubles that has not been permitted by him, and permitted for specific good purpose to the soul, how much more would these be in prayer! How constant, how daily, might it become! How it might settle and clear the atmosphere of the soul! How it might so dispose and lay away many anxieties which now take up their place there that there might be *room* for the higher themes and considerations of religion!

Many sensitive and fastidious natures are worn away by the constant friction of what are called little troubles. Without any great affliction, they feel that all the flower and sweetness of their life have faded; their eye grows dim, their cheek care-worn, and their spirit loses hope and elasticity, and becomes bowed with premature age; and in the midst of tangible and physical comfort they are restless and unhappy. The constant under-current of little cares and vexations which is slowly wearing on the finer springs of life is seen by no one: scarce ever do they speak of these things to their nearest friends. Yet, were there a friend of a spirit so discerning as to feel and sympathize in all these things, how much of this repressed electric restlessness would pass off through such a sympathizing mind!

Yet among human friends this is all but impossible; for minds are so diverse that what is a trial and a care to one is a matter of sport and amusement to another, and all the inner world breathed into a human ear only excites a surprised or contemptuous pity. To whom, then, shall the soul turn? Who will feel that to be affliction which each spirit feels to be so? If the soul shut itself within itself, it becomes morbid, the fine chords of the mind and nerves by constant wear become jarring and discordant: hence fretfulness, discontent, and habitual irritability steal over the sincere Christian.

But to the Christian that really believes in the agency of God in the smallest events of life, that confides in his love and makes his sympathy his refuge, the thousand minute cares and perplexities of life become each one a fine affiliating bond between the soul and its God. God is known, not by abstract definition and by high-raised conceptions of the soul's aspiring hours, but known as a man knoweth his friend. He is known by the hourly wants he supplies, known by every care with which he momentarily sympathizes, every apprehension which he relieves, every temptation which he enables us to surmount. We learn to know God as the infant child learns to know its mother and its father, by all the helplessness and all the dependence which are incident to this commencement of our moral existence; and, as we go on thus year by year, and find in every changing situation, in every reverse, in every trouble, from the lightest sorrow to those which wring our soul from its depths, that he is equally present, and that his gracious aid is equally adequate, our faith seems gradually almost to change to sight. And God's existence, his love and care, seem to us more real than any other source of reliance; and multiplied cares and trials are only new avenues of acquaintance between us and heaven.

Suppose, in some bright vision unfolding to our view, in tranquil evening or solemn midnight, the glorified form of some departed friend should appear to us with the announcement: "This year is to be to you one of especial probation and discipline, with reference to perfecting you for a heavenly state. Weigh well and consider every incident of your daily life; for not one shall fall out by accident, but each one is to be a finished and indispensable link in a bright chain that is to draw you upward to the skies!"

With what new eyes should we now look on our daily lot! And, if we found in it not a single change,—the same old cares, the same perplexities, the same uninteresting drudgeries still,—with what new meaning would every incident be invested! and with what other and sublimer spirit could we meet them! Yet, if announced by one rising from the dead with the visible glory of a spiritual world, this truth could be asserted no more clearly and distinctly than Jesus Christ has stated it already. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father. Not one of them is forgotten by him. And we are of more value than many sparrows; yea, even the hairs of our head are all numbered. Not till belief in these declarations, in their most literal sense, becomes the calm and settled habit of the soul is life ever redeemed from drudgery and dreary emptiness, and made full of interest, meaning, and divine significance. Not till then do its grovelling wants, its wearing cares, its stinging vexations, become to us ministering spirits, each one, by a silent but certain agency, fitting us for a higher and perfect sphere.—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

THE STILL HOUR.

HYMN OF TRUST.

O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, thou art near!

On thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, thou art near!

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

Out of the silent loneliness of the heart the prayer of confession rises to the fatherhood of God. The weight is lifted off the soul. We have told it all to him. He knew it, it is true: what was the need of telling him? No need to him, but comfort to us; for expression gives relief to tortured feeling. As long as we kept it, brooded over it, it was like the air in a sealed room: expressed, it was like the same air when, the windows thrown open, the sweet spring breeze came flowing in. We rise up. Half the weight of the secret pain is lifted off. We begin to feel ashamed of having despaired of life. We begin to feel the duty of forgetting sin, and pressing forward into the work of righteousness. This is the blessed work of prayer to God,—of simply intrusting to him all.—*S. A. Brooke.*

Life is felt to be a great and gracious boon by all who enjoy its light; and this is not too much felt. It is the wonderful creation of God, and it cannot be too much admired. Yes, life, despite of all that cynics or sentimentalists say, is a great and glorious gift. There is gladness in its infant voices. There is joy in the buoyant step of its youth. There is deep satisfaction in its strong maturity. There is holy peace in its quiet age. There is good for the good. There is virtue for the faithful. There is victory for the valiant. There is spirituality for the spiritual; and there is, even in this humble life, an infinity for the boundless in desire. There are blessings upon its birth; there is hope in its death; and there is, to consummate all,—there is eternity in its prospect.—*Orville Dewey.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

It is supposed that the Sermon on the Mount (as recorded in Matthew) was delivered about this time; that is, a little after the call of Matthew. It would naturally take a whole volume, to do justice to this subject. But we will give here two sketches, or plans, of the sermon, which may assist readers to form a clear idea of the contents, and then call attention to some striking characteristics and qualities of the teaching contained therein. We may call this lesson "A *First* Lesson on the Sermon on the Mount."

Our first interpretation of the subject is taken from Hase's Life of Christ. He describes the contents of the sermon thus:—

Introduction.—Addressed to those feeling their spiritual needs, and longing for a kingdom of love. (Matt. v. 1–16.)

Part 1.—The relation of the kingdom of heaven to the Jewish theocracy, described in general, and with single illustrations, as the contrast of inward and external righteousness. (Matt. v. 16–48.)

Part 2.—The contrast of Christian obedience and Pharisaic righteousness, in almsgiving, fasting, and prayer. (Matt. vi. 1–18.)

Part 3.—The temporal and the eternal: the supreme value of the latter, resulting, when made the aim of life, as joyful activity in the former. (Matt. vi. 18–34.)

Part 4.—Miscellaneous truths and precepts. (Matt. vii. 1–12.)

Conclusion.—Practical application. The necessity of changing all theory into love and action.

Here is another arrangement which has been used for a Sunday-school lesson:—

Its subject, the spiritual nature of Christianity.

1. True happiness is from within, the state of the heart. (Matt. v. 1–12.)
2. But must shine out in the life. (13–20.)
3. Duty is also within,—rules the heart. (20–48.)
4. And based on religion, which must be inward. (vi. 1–18.)
5. And must be supreme. (19–24.)
6. For outward things, repose on God. (25–34.)
7. For inward blessings, pray to God. (vii. 7–11.)
8. The evidence of true faith is the life. (12–23.)
9. Its end is security or peace. (24–27.)

It is best to read the Sermon on the Mount with the Revised Version at hand, and note carefully the differences in the translation. Perhaps the most important are the omission of the words "without a cause" (Matt. v. 22), and "be not anxious" instead of "take no thought" in Matt. vi. 22, and in other verses of the same chapter.

Observe that the Sermon on the Mount might be called the text-book of practical Christianity. It teaches the importance of practical goodness as contrasted with doctrines and ceremonies. There is nothing in it about sacraments or ceremonial religion, nothing about popes or bishops, nothing about Sabbaths or churches. Even public worship might seem rather to be condemned than recommended. None of the doctrines of the creeds are even alluded to. All is practical. All goes to life and action.

Nevertheless, it might also be said that the subject of this sermon is a statement of the intuitive, inward, transcendental nature of goodness. That goodness is of the heart seems to be the key-note. At first it might seem to make Christianity all outward in life and action; and, again, looking upon another side it seems to make it all inward.

To others it may appear the text-book of reformers. It is very radical. Non-resistants may quote the passage beginning Matt. v. 39; those who think it wrong to hold property, "Lay not up treasures on earth"; those who object to all formal worship, the text, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet"; and socialists may quote the blessings on the poor and the woes pronounced on the rich in Luke (which is thought by many to be a different account of the same sermon).

And yet conservatives might find arguments in it for their opinions likewise,—in those passages where Jesus says that he has "not come to destroy, but to fulfil," and that no one must break the least of the commandments, nor teach others to do so, until they are fulfilled entirely; that is, replaced by something better.

One other point: one of the most wonderful things about Jesus is the confidence he showed in the capacity of the human soul to understand, love, and obey the truth. The learned men did not understand him. But the common people seemed to have understood him well enough, and to have heard him gladly. He taught the Samaritan woman that God is a Spirit, and his worship spiritual. And he does not scruple to tell the poor, ignorant, and wicked people that they must be perfect as God in heaven. Who, before or since, ever had such confidence in human nature as he?

[This lesson has been adapted with very slight changes from one by James Freeman Clarke, in "Deacon Herbert's Bible-class." The editor will answer questions on New Testament study, so far as it is in her power. Address, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.]

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

We are very apt to imagine that the disposition to do right is, or ought to be, the natural and normal condition of childhood, and that doing wrong is something un-

natural and exceptional with children. As a consequence, when they do right, we think there is nothing to be said. That is, or ought to be, a matter of course. It is only when they do wrong that we notice their conduct, and then, of course, with censure and reproaches. Thus our discipline consists mainly, not in gently leading and encouraging them in the right way, but in deterring them, by fault-finding and punishment, from going wrong.

We will take first an extremely simple case; namely, the fault of making too much noise in opening and shutting the door in going in and out of a room. Georgie and Charlie are two boys, both about five years old, and both prone to the same fault. We will suppose that their mothers take opposite methods to correct them, Georgie's mother depending upon the influence of commendation and encouragement when he does right, and Charlie's upon the efficacy of reproaches and punishments when he does wrong.

ONE METHOD.

Georgie, eager to ask his mother some question, or to obtain some permission in respect to his play, bursts into her room some morning with great noise, opening and shutting the door violently, and making much disturbance. In a certain sense he is not to blame for this, for he is wholly unconscious of the disturbance he makes. The entire cognizant capacity of his mind is occupied with the object of his request. He not only had no intention of doing any harm, but has no idea of his having done any.

His mother takes no notice of the noise he made, but answers his question; and he goes away making almost as much noise in going out as he did in coming in.

The next time he comes in it happens—entirely by accident, we will suppose—that he makes a little less noise than before. This furnishes his mother with her opportunity.

"Georgie," she says, "I see you are improving."

"Improving?" repeats Georgie, not knowing to what his mother refers.

"Yes," said his mother: "you are improving in coming into the room without making a noise by opening and shutting the door. You did not make nearly as much noise this time as you did before when you came in. Some boys, whenever they come into a room, make so much noise in opening and shutting the door that it is very disagreeable. If you go on improving as you have begun, you will soon come in as still as any gentleman."

The next time Georgie comes in he takes the utmost pains to open and shut the door as silently as possible.

He makes his request. His mother shows herself unusually ready to grant it.

"You opened and shut the door like a gentleman," she says. "I ought to do everything for you that I can when you take so much pains not to disturb or trouble me."

ANOTHER METHOD.

Charlie's mother, on the other hand, acts on a different principle. Charlie comes in sometimes, we will suppose, in a quiet and proper manner. His mother takes no notice of this. She considers it a matter of course. By and by, however, under the influence of some special eagerness, he makes a great noise. Then his mother interposes. She breaks out upon him with,—

"Charlie, what a noise you make! Don't you know better than to slam the door in that way when you come in? If you can't learn to make less noise in going in and out, I shall not let you go in and out at all."

Charlie knows very well that this is an empty threat. Still, the utterance of it, and the scolding that accompanies it, irritate him a little; and the only possible good effect that can be expected to result from it is to make him try, the next time he comes in, to see how small an abatement of the noise he usually makes will do as a kind of make-believe obedience to his mother's command. He might, indeed, honestly answer his mother's angry question by saying that he does not know better than to make such a noise. He does not know why the noise of the door should be disagreeable to his mother. It is not disagreeable to him. On the contrary, it is agreeable. Children always like noise, especially if they make it themselves. And, although Charlie has often been told that he must not make any noise, the reason for this—namely, that, though noise is a source of pleasure, generally, to children, especially

when they make it themselves, it is almost always a source of annoyance and pain to grown persons—has never really entered his mind so as to be actually comprehended as a practical reality. His ideas in respect to the philosophy of the transaction are, of course, exceedingly vague; but, so far as he forms any idea, it is that his mother's words are the expression of some mysterious but unreasonable sensitiveness on her part, which awakens in her a spirit of fault-finding and ill-humor that vents itself upon him in blaming him for nothing at all, or, as he would express it more tersely, if not so elegantly, that she is "very cross." In other words, the impression made by the transaction upon his moral sense is that of wrong-doing on his mother's part, and not at all on his own.—*Jacob Abbott's "Gentle Measures in Training the Young."*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

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3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

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The King's Daughters of Concord, New Hampshire, offer the following books. Address Miss Gertrude Downing, 33 Pleasant Street, Concord, New Hampshire. "Robert Elsmere," Ward; "Blithedale Romance," Hawthorne; "Dreams," Olive Schreiner; "For a Woman's Sake"; "A Window in Thrums," Barrie; "The American Senator," Trollope; "Endymion"; "Last Days of Pompeii," Bulwer Lytton; "Romola," George Eliot; "Lorna Doone," Blackmore; "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," Stevenson; "A History of our own Times: From Queen

Elizabeth to the Berlin Congress," McCarthy; "The Nineteenth Century," Mackenzie.

Books offered by Cambridge Branch of Cheerful Letter Exchange. Address Mrs. Charles W. Kettell, 3 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Arnold's "First Latin Book"; "Introduction to Latin Composition," Harkness; "Introductory Latin Book"; "Prefatory Latin Prose Book," Hanson; Ollendorff's "Method of Learning French"; "Télémaque"; Nugent's French and English Dictionary; Clifton's French and English Dictionary; "Cours du Style," Larousse; "Exercises Français," Dussouchet; "Conversations on Italy in English and French"; "Grammaire Française," Brachet; "Hebrew Grammar," Megrowitz; "Greek Grammar," Bullions; Hadley's "Greek Grammar"; "Exercises in Greek Prose," Jones; "Selections from Greek Historians"; "Mental Philosophy," Haven; Upham's "Mental Philosophy"; "Eclectic Moral Philosophy," Boyd; Blair's "Rhetoric"; Boyd's "Rhetoric"; "Manual of Reading," Potter; Sargent's "Original Dialogues"; Murray's "English Exercises"; "College Hymn and Tune Book," Perkins; "Second Book of Drawing," Clark; "Teacher's Manual," Orcutt; Ray's "Algebra"; Ray's "Arithmetic"; Becker's "German Grammar"; Ollendorff's "German Grammar"; Key to Ollendorff's "German Grammar."

N.B.—Old correspondents of the Cambridge Branch will please address the members to whom they have formerly written.

Mrs. Louisa H. Goodwin, Allwood, Amherst County, Virginia, offers "The Witness of the Sun," by Amélie Rives; "The Importance of Divine Truth," Rev. A. I. Brown: Park's *Floral Magazine* for 1893; the *Mayflower*, a floral magazine for 1892; and six numbers of *Success with Flowers*.

Miss A. E. Denny, Lisbon, New Hampshire, offers some German comic papers called *Fliegende Blätter*.

Three numbers of *Guide to Holiness*, December, 1893, and June and July, 1894; three numbers of *Converted Catholic*, December, 1893, and July and August, 1894; seven numbers of *Heathen Woman's Friend*, 1892 (this is a good missionary magazine); *Ladies' Home Journal*, May, August, October, November, December, 1892, also January, 1893, and January, February, March, April, 1894; *Review of Reviews*, March, April, May, July, 1893. Apply to Mrs. Julia E. Merriam, Pequabuck, Connecticut.

REQUESTS.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. W. F. James, Bibb, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Rev. Charles Graves, Box 328, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, LaPine, Crenshaw County, Alabama.

Mrs. Stowell, Mrs. Jayne, and Mrs. Miner, all need children's books. Mrs. Stowell also asks books for a mining population (many are educated people). Mr. Graves asks for a Sunday-school and parish library, Mr. Rhoden for an industrial school for colored children.

Mrs. Hepsy Ann Staton says: "I am an old lady upwards of seventy years old, am not educated myself, as I lived before the days of free schools; but I have two smart grand-daughters, Roberta Henson, aged eighteen years, and Mattie Henson, aged sixteen years,—both fond of reading and study, but not able to buy books. I would be thankful for some reading for them. Would like some magazines." Address Roberta and Mattie Henson, Allwood, Amherst, Virginia.

Mrs. Louise H. Goodwin, Allwood, Amherst County, Virginia, asks for "Barriers Burned Away," by E. P. Roe; "Barbara Dering," by Amélie Rives; and "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story" and "Janet's Repentance," George Eliot; also a bound volume of "Chatterbox" (no matter how old). Any Baptist publications suitable for a Sunday-school will be acceptable.

A friend sent me a quarterly magazine, called the *Physical Review*, and I offered it in the Book Club; but, after the offer was published, the friend was compelled to stop the magazine. If any one would send it to me, I would be very grateful, as I prize it so

highly. I have not received any of 1894. I would be so thankful for the *Arena* or *Forum*, if some one could send them to me after reading. I would pass them on to others. E. M. Backus, High Point, Guilford County, North Carolina.

I am one of the helpless shut-ins. I have been confined to my bed twenty-six years, and am almost as helpless as a baby. I am hardly ever able to sit up. Letters and reading are a great comfort to me. Any of these would be very acceptable: "Uncle Tom's Cabin"; "Dred"; "Little Golden's Daughter"; "A Harvest of Wild Oats," by Fanny Fern. I live five miles from a railroad. I have to lie on my back, and do sewing, writing, reading, and everything in that position. Mrs. Cora Crewdson, Payson, Illinois, Box 131.

Rosella Dickey, Argos, Marshall County, Indiana, writes that she has been quite ill this summer. She has received some reading matter from the Cheerful Letter Exchange, but not any has come to her since the strike. Some one sent her a box of silk and satin pieces, but she does not know the lady's name, and would like to thank her for them. Would like "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," Natural History, a good magazine, or *Ladies' Home Journal* or *Ladies' World*.

Any one having classical piano music and musical literature to give away, please send to me, and I will give it to deserving and talented young musicians who have not the means to purchase. Mrs. J. B. Kline, 1618 West 6th Avenue, Topeka, Kansas.

As I am an invalid, and obliged to pass most of my time indoors, I would be very thankful for reading to pass away the weary hours. I would like the *Ladies' Home Journal*, or any good magazine, or almost any good reading. Address Mrs. N. M. Merrick, East Hampstead, Rockingham County, New Hampshire.

Mrs. Annie L. Williams, Centre Ridge, Conway County, Arkansas, desires some reading matter on the subject of Christian Science.

Christiana Markle, 106 Barrett Street, Schenectady, New York, wants reading matter. Would like *Ladies' Home Journal*. She is poor and feeble, and enjoys reading. She also asks for reading for Mrs. Rachel L. Mesick, New Salem, Albany County, New York, who is a widow of eighty years, and very poor.

(Mrs. M. was written to by the Chelsea Branch long ago, but no reply was received.)

Mrs. Sallie Coverdale, Ogden, Ohio, would like any one of Josiah Allen's wife's books, *Our Dumb Animals*, *Unitarian*, and *Outlook*.

Mrs. Frank Smith, Mansel, Maine, would be glad of reading matter.

I am an invalid and great sufferer. Reading is my greatest comfort, when well enough to read; and, as we live *out* of the world almost, a good book is a real luxury. I always lend everything I can get in that line to every one I know who cares to read it. It is the only return I can make to those who kindly spare me out of their abundance. We are poor, and have so much severe sickness in the house, and one son, a cripple from birth, who also takes delight in books, especially poetry. Mrs. Louise T. Jaeger, Cleveland, Le Sueur County, Min nesota.

Mrs. Chard, 39 Orchard Street, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, would like an Episcopalian paper or reading.

Mrs. J. Winterrowd, Wheeling, Missouri, has been an invalid nineteen years with spinal disease, and greatly desires reading.

I should like very much to have "Ben-Hur" when you have it to spare, or any other good reading. Mrs. Jessie Stoddard, North Platte, Lincoln County, Nebraska.

Mrs. Joseph Austin, Olympia, Washington, is quite anxious to obtain reading matter for herself and children. Her family consists of five girls and a boy,—Florence, fifteen; Andrew, thirteen; Charity, eleven; Rachel, nine; Jennie, seven; Josie, six. She would like "Alone with God" for herself, and papers and magazines for the children.

(*Every Other Sunday* and *Youth's Companion* are being sent.)

I am confined to the house all of the time, have been shut in for over five years, at times suffer much pain; and reading is a great pleasure to me. I belong to the Shut-in Society, and it has been a source of com-

fort to me both spiritually and temporally. I was fifty-four years old in March. I enjoy letters very much, but am not able to answer all for want of postage. I am an Episcopalian, and I should be glad to get such reading,—in fact, any reading that would tend heavenward. M. G. Chadd, 39 Orchard Street, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania.

A lady in moderate circumstances, who uses scrap-books and pictures most skilfully for poor children in hospitals, would like to have some sent to her. For this address please send to Mrs. H. R. Hallett.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to all who have sent me books and papers. I have been a helpless invalid for four and a half years, not able to do any kind of work, so reading and what few letters I write have been my only solace in my hours of suffering. My physician says I can never get well, so I suppose I must submit. I feel thankful that I can rise from bed and look out upon the beautiful earth, though I can never walk upon it again. With love for all the dear Christian workers, Abby C. Witham, Upper Gloucester.

(You have forgotten to give us the name of the State. Please send it to Mrs. Hallett, not to the editor.)

Mrs. Hallett has received a letter from 4213 Oakenwald Avenue, to which she would be glad to reply, but the writer did not mention town or State.

Would Miss Eleanor E. Allen of Boston please send me her address. I have forgotten her number of street, and know no other way to get it than through this friendly paper, although I have not received it for two months. Would be glad of any good papers or reading matter any one would please to send to me. Will the kind lady who sent me the *Unitarian* to Nesbit, Nebraska, please send it to my address, Mrs. J. H. Allison, Emerald, Nebraska?

Will the young woman who wrote from the almshouse at Putnam, Connecticut, kindly send her name to Miss Langmaid, as her letter has been lost?

Miss F. H. Curtis, 445 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass., will lend the following books by mail and pay postage one way: "Not Angels Quite," Nathan Haskell Dole; "The American Citizen," C. F. Dole; "Polly Oliver's Problem," K. D. Wiggin; "Old Curiosity Shop," Charles Dickens; "The Colonel's Opera Cloak," No Name Series; "The Woman in White," Wilkie Collins; "Harry" (poems), by the author of "Mrs. Ferringham's Journal"; "Robinson Crusoe," Daniel De Foe; "Daylight Land," W. H. H. Murray; "Romola," George Eliot; "The Evolution of Christianity," M. J. Savage; "A Cup of Loving Service," Eliza Dean Taylor; "Cape Cod Folks," Sally Pratt McLean; "Hiram Golf's Religion," George H. Hepworth; "The Faith that makes Faithful," William C. Gannett and Jenkin Lloyd Jones; "In Camp and Field," B. F. Taylor; "Boots and Saddles," "Following the Guidon," E. B. Custer.

A GOOD BOOK.

We will take for our good book, this month, Dr. E. E. Hale's "How to Do It."

As "Gentle Measures" is the best practical help for mothers, so is "How to Do It" for the young people themselves. Indeed, most of it is just as useful and interesting for us older people; but what an advantage it is to be started right in early life, instead of waiting twenty or thirty years to learn what would have helped us so much all along the way.

Here are the subjects treated: "How to Talk"; "Talk"; "How to Write"; "How to Read," I; "How to Read," II; "How to go into Society"; "Life at School"; "Life in Vacation"; "Life Alone"; "Habits in Church"; "Life with Children"; "Life with your Elders"; "Habits of Reading"; "Getting Ready."

We will give an extract from the chapter "How to Talk," but we hope that before long this book will at least be in all our Cheerful Letter Exchange libraries; and whoever wishes to give a book to a young girl or boy, between twelve and eighteen or twenty years old, can hardly do better than choose this. Every topic is treated in so bright and entertaining a way that it is far more attractive than most stories. It is sold by Roberts Brothers in Boston; but almost any bookseller would be likely to know of it.

There is no particular method for talking which will not also apply to swimming, or skating, or reading, or dancing, or, in general, to living. And, if you fail in talking, it is because you have not yet applied in talking the simple master-rules of life.

For instance, the first of these rules is

TELL THE TRUTH.

Only last night I saw poor Bob Edmeston break down completely in the very beginning of his acquaintance with one of the nicest girls I know, because he would not tell the truth, or did not. I was standing right behind them, listening to Dr. Ollapod, who was explaining to me the history of the second land grant made to Gorges, and between the sentences I had a chance to hear every word poor Bob said to Laura. Laura is a nice clever girl, who has come to make the Watsons a visit through her whole vacation at Poughkeepsie; and all the young people are delighted with her pleasant ways, and all of them would be glad to know more of her than they do. Bob really wants to know her, and he was really glad to be introduced to her. Mrs. Pollexfen presented him to her, and he asked her to dance, and they stood on the side of the cotillon behind me and in front of Dr. Ollapod. After they had taken their places, "Bob said, "Jew go to the opera last week, Miss Walter?" He meant, "Did you go to the opera last week?"

"No," said Laura, "I did not."

"Oh, 'twas charming!" said Bob. And there this effort at talk stopped, as it should have done, being founded on nothing but a lie; which is to say, not founded at all. For, in fact, Bob did not care two straws about the opera. He had never been to it but once, and then he was tired before it was over. But he pretended he cared for it. He thought that at an evening party he must talk about the opera, and the lecture season, and the assemblies, and a lot of other trash, about which in fact he cared nothing, and so knew nothing. Not caring and not knowing, he could not carry on his conversation a step. . . .

I could tell you twenty stories to the same point. And please observe that the distinction between the two systems of talk is the eternal distinction between the people whom Thackeray calls snobs and the people who are gentlemen and ladies. Gentlemen and ladies are sure of their ground. They pretend to nothing that they are not. They have no occasion to act one or another part. It is not possible for them, even in the *choice of subjects*, to tell lies.

The principle of selecting a subject which thoroughly interests you requires only one qualification. You may be very intensely interested in some affairs of your own; but in general society you have no right to talk of them, simply because they are not of equal interest to other people. Of course, you may come to me for advice, or go to your master, or to your father or mother, or to any friend, and in form lay open your own troubles or your own life, and make these the subject of your talk. But *in general society* you have no right to do this. For the rule of life is that men and women must not think of themselves, but of others: they must live for others, and then they will live rightly for themselves. So the second rule for talk would express itself thus: —

DO NOT TALK ABOUT YOUR OWN AFFAIRS.

I remember how I was mortified last summer up at the Tiptop House, though I was not in the least to blame, by a display Emma Fortinbras made of herself. There had gathered round the fire in the sitting-room quite a group of the different parties who had come up from the different houses, and we all felt warm and comfortable and social; and, to my real delight, Emma and her father and her cousin came in,—they had been belated somewhere. She is a sweet pretty little thing, really the belle of the village, if we had such things, and we are really quite proud of her in one way; but I am sorry to say that she is a little goose, and sometimes she manages to show this just when you don't want her to. Of course, she shows this, as all other geese show themselves, by cackling about things that interest no one but herself. When she came into the room, Alice ran to her and kissed her, and took her to the warmest seat, and took her little cold hands to rub them, and began to ask her how it had all happened, and where they had been, and all the other questions.

Now, you see, this was a very dangerous position. Poor Emma was not equal to it. The subject was given her, and so far she was not to blame. But when, from the

misfortunes of the party, she rushed immediately to detail individual misfortunes of her own, resting principally on the history of a pair of boots which she had thought would be strong enough to last all through the expedition, and which she had meant to send to Sparkawk's before she left home to have their heels cut down, only she had forgotten, and now these boots were thus and thus, and so and so, and *she* had no others with her, and *she* was sure that *she* did not know what *she* should do when *she* got up in the morning,—I say, when she got as far as this, in all this thrusting upon people who wanted to sympathize a set of matters which had no connection with what interested them, excepting so far as their personal interest in her gave it, she violated the central rule of life; for she showed she was thinking of herself with more interest than she thought of others. Now to do this is bad living, and it is bad living which will show itself in bad talking.

But I hope you see the distinction. If Mr. Agassiz comes to you on the Field Day of the Essex Society, and says: "Miss Fanchon, I understand that you fell over from the steamer as you came from Portland, and had to swim half an hour before the boats reached you. Will you be kind enough to tell me how you were taught to swim, and how the chill of the water affected you, and, in short, all about your experience?" he then makes choice of the subject. He asks for all of the detail. It is to gratify him that you go into the detail, and you may therefore go into it just as far as you choose. Only take care not to lug in one little detail merely because it interests you, when there is no possibility that, in itself, it can have an interest for him.

[The following letter came a little too late for insertion in "The Mothers' Council," though intended for that department. Rather than postpone printing it, we give it here.]

FAIRY STORIES.

A sentence in Italics in the current *Cheerful Letter* has just caught my eye. "*Surely, no one would tell a fairy story.*" I thought it a bit of fine sarcasm until a careful reading of the article convinced me that its meaning was a sober and literal one. But, oh, the pity of it! Is it possible that there are children in the world who are deprived of fairy stories on principle? I, as an enthusiastic advocate of precisely the opposite method, gladly welcome an opportunity to give the other side.

Edison and Cornelia and doubtless Benjamin West and Sir Isaac Newton! Oh, you great grown-up people, can't you appreciate how even this famous galaxy may fail to satisfy the imaginative mind of a child? If you yourselves are so matter-of-fact that a scientific statement or an item of historical research is more to you than the grandest poem, can you not yet hope and pray that to your children may come some of the light that never was on sea or land,—the apprehension and comprehension of what is best and noblest in our literature?

As soon as Mother Goose and the lovely old nursery songs are outgrown, I should begin at once with the fairy story, —*never to be told as true* any more than the tale of

> "The old woman tossed up in a basket,
> Ninety times as high as the moon,"—

but still with all the vigor and enthusiasm which even a Roman matron might inspire. "The Three Bears," "The Sleeping Beauty," "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "The White Cat," "Aladdin," "The Three Wishes," "Fortunatus," "The Fisherman and his Wife,"—they are all charming stories, not without a moral if you insist upon one, and moreover a part of our literature which it is essential that our children should know. I can scarcely believe that there may be poor little unfortunates who prefer to hear about the development of the telegraph, however vividly told. My children revelled in a fairy world of their own, filled with giants, dragons, and elves, and peopled with names as famous as any in Gibbon or Hume,—oblivious to heat, cold, hunger, or discomfort, if I were only willing to light the magic torch.

All too soon the fairy radiance fades. Even on the child's reluctant mind press in the hard actualities of our every-day world, but the work is not done in vain. Now comes the time when the eager mind seeks the *truth*,—in science, in history, in life. Give it freely, with all the courage and

ardor you possess; for now you have the rich and fertile imagination of your child to help your labor. He can picture to himself far-off scenes, foreign ways, differing customs in a way he never could before. Poetry means much to him, kindles his mind, and fires his soul. And he appreciates, as no other training could teach him to appreciate, the values of tradition and myth.

We all want culture for our children,—the essence of the century's advance,—and we may be very sure that we cannot afford to neglect this most fruitful help to culture. Do not terrify or coarsen or brutalize by an unwise selection; but let the fairy story fill its proper and historic place in the development of the many-sided character intrusted to your care. To a character so trained Homer and Shakspere may be magic names when Edison is outgrown and forgotten.

THE STORK'S COMPLAINT.

"One-legged stork, thou standest sad and lonely;
A tear, methinks, I notice in thine eye.
Oh, tell to me, yes, whisper to me only,
What is the sorrow which I think I spy?"

And, lo! from out the meshes of the tidy
There came a feeble, mournful sort of squeak;
And while, amazed, I opened my eyes wide, he
Opened his mouth, and thus began to speak:

"I am so very tired of being artistic;
My life is one long, patient, painful ache;
I am so weary of these weird and mystic
Positions which they force my form to take.

"They've worked me in all kinds and sorts of stitches,
High art and button-hole, outline and cross stitch,
Standing around promiscuously in ditches,
And looking like a buzzard or an ostrich.

"They've worked me frequently on Java canvas,
On momie cloth, on flannels thin and thick;
In fact, in every single way they can fuss,
I have appeared, until I'm really sick.

"In crewels, in silk, in worsted, and in cotton,
Now black, now white, now grave, now madly gay,
They've worked me; and one wrong is unforgotten,—
They've done me most and worst in appliqué.

"Sometimes they plant me 'mid some rushes speary,
In attitudes no well-bred stork would take,
Holding up one leg till I get so weary
I sometimes think my poor strained back will break.

"They've worked me standing, running, sleeping, flying;
Sometimes I'm gazing at a crewel sun;
They've worked me every way, I think, but dying;
And, oh, I wish they'd do that, and be done!

"I could forgive them all this cruel wronging
If they would grant one favor, which I beg,
Would gratify but once my soul's deep longing,—
Just to put down my cramped and unused leg.

"Know you of any one with sorrows greater?
A creature with a life that's more forlorn?
Hounded forever by the decorator,
I wish, I wish I never had been born!"

A silence fell. I gazed. He had subsided.
I listened vainly. All was dumb and still
Upon the tidy, where the stork resided
With upheld leg and red and open bill.

—*Selected.*

OVERWORK.

I once had an old cook whose strength was giving out, and whom I tried to help; but soon found it was useless. If I washed the breakfast dishes, she did extra baking. If I prepared the dessert, she washed the kitchen windows. She was unwilling to derogate from her character as a martyr, and would not be helped. And still she kept me uncomfortable by her "put upon" ways and her repeated hints that she should break down. I used to be vexed with old Katie; but perhaps she can teach some of us a lesson.

There are times in every life when unlooked for emergencies compel overwork, and it is possible that in exceptional instances this demand may be life-long; but overwork is more often a habit of mind than a necessity. We allow ourselves to be habitually tired and anxious and care-taking; and we resist opportunities of rest because, unconsciously to ourselves, there is a latent vanity back of it all, whose gratification we are unwilling to part with.

And so our lives become, like Chinese pictures, very full, but without beauty or perspective; for the mind of an over-busy person narrows to its own field of activity, and, deprived of those larger outlooks where ideas and events show in their true proportions and relations, finally becomes possessed and controlled by its occupation instead of possessing and controlling it. If we perceive even a seed of this danger within ourselves, shall we not cast it out before it roots? Habitual forethought, system, and self-control can generally secure such rest and refreshment for mind, body, and spirit as they need without taking from the enthusiasm and industry which belongs to the daily tasks. Then, with a healthy body, a discerning mind, and a spirit that has learned something of the divine outlook, the fret and fume and grind of life will give place to a dignity and beauty that will bless ourselves and those about us.

HENRIETTA R. ELIOT.

REQUESTS AND OFFERS.

The editor asks any one who has a copy of the *Popular Science Monthly* to send away a few weeks after it comes out to write to her for the address of a correspondent who would be glad to have it. She would like to receive offers of *Harper's Young People* and the *Youth's Companion*. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Rev. Charles Graves, Anamosa, Iowa, asks for good high-class novels for his church library,—Dickens, Thackeray, Auerbach, Hawthorne, Black, etc. He has received a few of Walter Scott's. Travels and biographies would be very acceptable, and any good books for young people.

Frank W. Radcliffe, 1727 Harford Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, asks for any of Miss Alcott's works, and "David Copperfield" and "Great Expectations."

(Is there any public library in Baltimore?)

I offer (to young girls *only*) some more copies of "The Story of Ida," "The New Mistress," and "Henrietta's Wish." For young or old, "Cranford" and "The Heir of Redclyffe." For ministers, "The Christian Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sin," James Freeman Clarke. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

I am in very poor health, and dearly love good books. My husband is a cripple, and often not able to do any work. I have five children, aged six, eight, ten, twelve, and fourteen. Times are so hard that it is impossible for me to send them to school. I would like some books for them and myself, to help pass the weary hours in store for us this winter. I am a member of the Methodist Episcopal church. Mrs. Eva Robertson, Box 223, Dyersburg, Tenn.

Would it be out of the line of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to ask that letters or reading matter be sent to Mrs. Melinda Fooshee, Naples, Scott County, Illinois, on her birthday, December 15? She will be ninety years old on that day,—*so* poor, crippled, and a very great sufferer. I should like her to have *one* bright day in this world, if possible.

(We do not usually print birthday requests, but this seems to be an exception. We do not often have the opportunity to make a ninetieth birthday happy.)

I am very sorry to have sent out all the illustrated catalogues, etc., offered in a recent number without meeting all requests received for them, but hope to have more by and by. L. F. C.

I am about to become a subscriber to *The Cheerful Letter*. May I ask whether it would be allowable to write a letter occasionally to a correspondent? I am fond of writing, and would be glad to send a line now and then, but did not wish to do so until I was sure of your methods.

Answer. There is not any restriction on correspondence; and we are only too glad to have you write as many letters as you like. But we think it would be for the *convenience* of all our subscribers to let us know to whom they are writing or intend to write. We are then able to see that those shut-ins not chosen are remembered in some way; and sometimes our members may prefer such a person to one who has a great many friends and letters already.

There are no disappointments, it has been said, to those whose wills are bound up in the will of God.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on the first Friday in December at 25 Beacon Street at 10.30 A.M.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who, in the future, write to us for books, to send the name of some minister, as a reference; when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

Please observe that our Treasurer's address is changed from Linden Place, Brookline, to No. 53 Linden Street, Brookline.

The editor regrets that she can no longer answer all the personal letters she receives. It has become impossible.

Will our members remember that, while we do not print requests for scraps, our secretary, Miss Langmaid, will receive both requests for these and offers of the same.

Please also remember that, if you receive requests for money, it is best not to respond, but to send the name of the person who asks to Miss Langmaid or Miss Clarke.

Our object being more especially to give good books, we shall be obliged to omit requests for other articles. Such requests are often printed in the *Housewife* and in the papers of shut-in societies.

We should be very glad to have some of our correspondents occasionally respond to *requests*, as well as *offer* books. Many of our shut-ins are too late to receive the book for which they ask.

Will our correspondents remember that we cannot promise to print letters written on both sides of the paper, nor those written in pencil. All such letters must be copied before being printed, and we cannot undertake to do this.

The address of Rev. Helen G. Putnam has been changed from Jamestown, North Dakota, to Fargo, North Dakota.

The secretary of the Book Club asks that those who send books to correspondents would be kind enough to inform her of what is sent and to whom. If the givers of books are willing to comply with this request, it will assist her materially, and save her much trouble. If, for instance, you see a request for reading in *The Cheerful Letter* and begin a correspondence with the writer, and send her books or even boxes of books, Mrs. Hallett has no means of knowing this, unless you inform her; and the next writer may receive no answer. Yet she cannot tell which of the two to recommend. If Mrs. Smith receives fifty books in six months, and Mrs. Jones only two, Mrs. Hallett would rather recommend Mrs. Jones to those who offer books; but, unless givers will help us by sending a report, many of those who need books will remain unsupplied, especially those who are too scrupulous to repeat their request.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

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